PHYSICAL BIOSCIENCES DIVISION NEWSLETTER

May 13, 2005

Jay Keasling to lead Physical Biosciences Division

Laboratory Director Steve Chu announced that Jay Keasling will be he new Division Director for Physical Biosciences. Dr. Keasling succeeds Graham Fleming, who founded the division in 1997 and recently became the Lab's Deputy Director. "I am excited about the opportunity to lead the division," said Keasling. "I have very large shoes to fill. I look forward to working with the excellent scientists in PBD to build research collaborations within the division and with other divisions at LBNL to tackle some of the grand challenges facing our society, particularly those in the area of renewable energy, all the while doing the first-class science for which this Division is famous."

Paul Adams to lead BCSB

Jay Keasling has appointed Paul Adams as Head of the Berkeley Center for Structural Biology (BCSB) at the Advanced Light Source. Dr. Adams will lead a facility of five beamlines optimized for protein crystallography, serving 1,206 users from over 182 research groups in universities, industry and national laboratories. For the past six months, Dr. Adams has served as Acting Head of the BCSB, skillfully managing an organizational transition and introducing innovations such as Service Crystallography, wherein data collection experiments are performed for users at remote locations. He is currently leading a major upgrade of three beamlines that will place the BCSB at the forefront of today's most advanced crystallographic technology. Adams will continue his leadership of the Computational Crystallography Initiative, which develops automated computational tools to facilitate high-throughput structural biology. In April, his research group released the first version of PHENIX, a software package for rapid determination of macromolecular crystal structures. Congratulations, Paul!

Bertozzi, Nikaido win accolades for outstanding research

Physical bioscientist Carolyn Bertozzi was one of three UC Berkeley and Berkeley Lab researchers recently elected to the prestigious National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Bertozzi was recognized for her "distinguished and continuing achievements in original research." Dr. Bertozzi's work in the fields of glycochemistry and biological nanostructures is also the cover story in the latest issue of HHMI Bulletin. Separately, the American Academy of Arts and Science announced the election of 213 new fellows this month, including physical bioscientist Hiroshi Nikaido. AAAS members represent leaders in scholarship, business, the arts, and public affairs. Dr. Nikaido studies antibiotic resistance to infectious bacterial diseases. Just last year, Bristol-Meyers Squibb awarded him the "Freedom to Discover" award for his groundbreaking contributions to the field, which have led to more effective antibiotics. An induction ceremony will be held in October.

Holbrook recognized as DOE Outstanding Mentor

Physical bioscientist Stephen Holbrook received a 2004 DOE Outstanding Mentor Award for his continuing mentorship of DOE program students. Dr. Holbrook has been working with undergraduates for the past five years, through such programs as SULI, CCI, and PST. Dr. Holbrook received the award at a special ceremony in March, along with four other Berkeley Lab members. In addition to his regular research and mentoring responsibilities, Dr. Holbrook is an active member of Berkeley Lab's Diversity Council, which makes recommendations to the Lab leadership for creating a world-class work environment that can recruit and retain a workforce reflecting the diversity of the local community and the nation.

Holbrook (right) with Peter Feletra, Asst. Director of DOEs Office of Workforce Development

Potter Street: A new home for synthetic biology

Berkeley Lab and UC Berkeley have joined forces to establish a multidisciplinary research facility at 717 Potter Street, a 72,000 square-foot space with excellent laboratory facilities and prime location in the heart of the Bay Area bioscience hub. Division research labs occupying the new space include Jay Keasling, Carlos Bustamante, Adam Arkin and Daniel Fletcher, plus some administrative and management staff. Together, they will comprise the Berkeley Center for Synthetic Biology, which represents a major step in consolidating and strengthening the Division's efforts to deliver on the promises of that growing field. Detailed information about building safety, access, transportation and resources is available at http://www.lbl.gov/potterstreet/.

Synthetic Biology series talks available online

The spring Synthetic Biology Seminar Series, jointly sponsored by PBD, QB3, and CITRIS, wrapped up this month with Stanford biochemical engineer Chaitan Khosla discussing developments in polyketide biosynthesis. Talks by biochemist Peter Schultz and bioethicist Laurie Zoloth are now available online.

Purchasing made fast and simple

Below is a short list of key information needed to process purchases through PBDPurchasing@lbl.gov. By providing **ALL** of this info in your initial request, you will receive your purchases faster and avoid the need to respond to our requests for additional information needed to fill your order.

1. Name, address and phone # of vendor (indicate if you don't know what vendor to use)
2. Catalog #, description, quantity and price of item
3. Project ID
4. Requestor name and phone #
5. Although many tend to use "ASAP" as a due date, we cannot effectively prioritize orders with this description. Please provide a realistic date when the purchase is needed. Our goal is to process orders within 24 hours of receiving all the needed information.
6. All returns must go through PBDPurchasing@lbl.gov for correct processing.

Please send all purchase requests and inquires to PBDPurchasing@lbl.gov. You'll receive an automatic email showing the expected delivery date, Pcard/PO number, and buyer. Please refer to that information when inquiring about your order. Note that orders placed with contract vendors Boise, Sigma-Aldrich, VWR and Fisher will not generate an email. Please pass this information on to any new students in your groups who may need to purchase things for your lab. Thank you for helping us to help you!

Working late? Use a security escort

Due to limited parking both on campus and on the hill, it's difficult and potentially dangerous for people working late at night to get to their vehicles. LBNL security escorts are available between 7:30 pm and 5 am to transport you to the nearest BART station or to the LBNL or UCB campus. Call the Blackberry Gate at 486-4050 to arrange help. Potter Street occupants can also call the Aquatic Park mobile patrol (734-4786) or foot patrol (367-7800) for an escort to their car or bike parked outdoors or in the garage. Please allow some time for a security guard to come to your location. Also, please coordinate your need for an escort with your colleagues, and consider sharing a ride with them.

Safety reminder: Clear the zone!

This is a friendly reminder to keep the areas in front of emergency eye wash showers and electrical panels clear of debris. The OSHA standard is a clear area that is 30" wide and 36" deep, with a 28" wide path to the unit. Most eye washes and showers now have the "clear area" emarked with yellow and black tape. In a special message to employees, Lab director Steve Chu emphasized that "taking time to work safely is our highest organizational value" and his top expectation of our performance. We thank you for your continued support of safety within PBD. More information at the PBD EH&S website.

We want to let the division know what you are doing. Please tell us about your recent awards, talks, and other achievements by writing us at pbdwebmaster@lbl.gov.